difficult to conclude that standards of higher education in India are lower in comparison with those in the developed countries. Though there would be scope for improvement in standard, in several cases, the courses and programmes offered by universities/institutions in India, compare favourably with those offered in the developed countries.

(b) According to the information available, some universities in the developed countries of the West insist on qualifying in an entrance test or specially conducted language proficiency test for students from the developing countries including India.

(c) As a part of its statutory responsibility for maintenance and coordination of standards in the Universities, the University Grants Commission has been taking several initiatives and measures. These include strengthening of the infrastructure in the universities and colleges, introduction of new courses in emerging areas, improvement and updating of courses, support for research, improvement of faculty and so on. These measures are part of a continuous process.

Coaching-cum-schooling by SAI under NSTC Scheme

2842. SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of children who received the benfits of coaching-cum-schooling facility provided by Sports Authority of India under National Sports Talent Contest scheme during the last three years;

(b) the percentage of such children selected from rural and urban schools; and

(c) the number of children from Tamil Nadu who received the benefit and their age groups during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS AND WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): (a) The National Sports Talent Contest (NSTC) scheme was launched by the Sports Authority of India (SAI) during the year 1985 and so far two National Sports Talent Contests have been held in November, 1985 and November, 1986. 158 children were selected in 1985; out of which 66 children took admission in the schools adopted by the SAI during the academic session 1986-87. 462 children were selected on the basis of NSTC 1986, and so far about 300 children have joined the schools adopted by the SAI for coaching-cum-schooling facilities during the academic session 1987-88.

(b) The percentage of children separately from rural and urban areas is not available as the selection is done on merit and no quota is fixed for children from rural urban areas.

(c) One boy from Tamil Nadu availed of the facility under the scheme during the academic session 1986-87 and two boys and two girls are availing of the facilities during the current academic session 1987-88. The age at the time of the selection of these children was between 9-12 years.

Ships built in India

2843. PROF. B. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what percentage of Indian owned ocean-going vessels were built in Indian shipyards;

(b) what is the cost of production and construction cycle of medium and heavy vessels when compared to those available in South East Asia;

(c) what is the plan of Government to encourage ship building in view of the fierce competition and high cost of construction and long period of construction cycle;

(d) what are the countries where ship building is directly subsidised and to what extent; and

(e) what are the causes for the failure of Indian ship building not being able to meet the indigenous requirements?